

Greetings from Governor McGreevey & Commissioner Levin

The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) is committed to taking a strong stand against domestic violence throughout our state. Through DCA's Division on Women, we have implemented a variety of programs to assist those who are victims of domestic violence and to help prevent other women from becoming victims in the future.

Just this year, we signed into law legislation protecting victims of domestic violence from insurance discrimination. And understanding that education is critical to putting an end to domestic violence, we also signed into law legislation that provides for instruction to elementary, middle, and high school students on the dynamics of domestic violence and child abuse.


These two bills alone show important advancements in New Jersey's fight against domestic abuse and demonstrate our commitment to making New Jersey safer for survivors of domestic violence. And we are doing so much more.

This brochure is intended to help those who find themselves in a support role for a victim of domestic violence. Your support could make a big difference in the victim's life and it is a role that you should understand. This brochure gives you some helpful tips on how to be truly supportive and outlines the things to do – and not to do – to help.

Domestic violence is an especially destructive form of abuse because it wears a familiar face. It is a terror that has turned too many homes into a place where victims silently suffer from both physical and emotional abuse. We hope this and other educational information provided by the Division on Women can help.

With all good wishes,


James E. McGreevey
Governor


Susan Bass Levin
Commissioner

What you CAN say to someone who you suspect is being battered:

*I care about you and I'm sad this is happening to you.
You don't deserve to be abused.
The violence will get worse.
I am afraid for your safety.*

You should:

- Emphasize that you are concerned. Let the victim know you are supportive and that she is not responsible for what is happening to her – it's not her fault.
- Emphasize that when the victim is ready, there are a number of options available to help her. Allow her to make the decision that she needs help. Do not try to diagnose or treat the problem yourself, but you can offer to help her, including making contact with referral agencies.
- Demonstrate that you respect her decision if she decides to stay with her partner, even though you may not agree with it. Some victims leave and return to their partners several times. Let her know you support her no matter what and that going back does not mean failure.

What NOT to say to someone you suspect is being battered:

"If someone hit me once, I would leave. I don't know why you don't just leave!"

You don't know why she isn't leaving. Her reality is probably very different than yours. Leaving a partner can be a very difficult process and often is a dangerous process for victims of domestic violence. In most cases, the most dangerous time for a victim is right after she leaves.

Also:

- Don't dismiss her fears of him as if she is overreacting
- Don't try to instill shame in her for making the decision to stay or return to the abusive relationship
- Don't tell her she is a battered woman – let her tell you

What you can do to help:



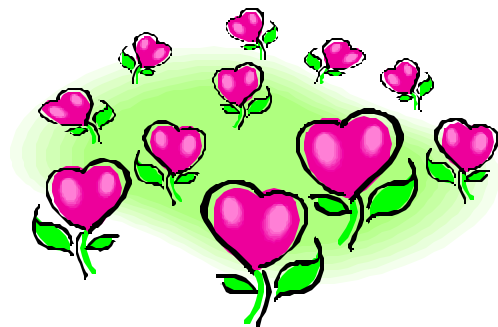
- Supply her with referrals to local agencies that help victims of domestic violence
- Listen without judging – give her plenty of time to talk; listening comes before discussing solutions
- Continue to be her friend while expressing your concern for her safety
- Understand that comments about the abuser often will be mixed messages – she will express both good and bad feelings
- Educate yourself about domestic violence

Remember...

There are many signs to look for that may suggest someone you know is in an abusive situation. You should be aware of:

- Unexplained injuries
- Someone stalking, monitoring and/or following her
- Repeated phone calls and/or disruptive visits to the workplace
- Absenteeism
- Unexplained changes in performance

Let the victim decide what to do and what is best for her. She knows her own situation the best. Do not put yourself in physical jeopardy to help. You cannot help anyone if you are hurt.



You Can Help End Domestic Violence

- Sometimes, people want to help victims of domestic violence, but don't know what to say
- Sometimes, people say the wrong things
- Sometimes, people are afraid to say anything at all

For many reasons, it is often hard for a woman to acknowledge she is being abused by the person who is supposed to love her.

Talking to a friend who is being beaten may be difficult for you, but it may be the best way to be a friend.

If you are concerned about a colleague, friend or family member, the information in this brochure may help.

Helpful Phone Numbers

New Jersey County Domestic Violence Programs

Atlantic	1-800-286-4184 OR 609-646-6767
Bergen	
Shelter Our Sisters	(201) 944-9600
Alternatives to Domestic Violence	(201) 336-7551
Burlington	(609) 871-7551
Camden	(856) 227-1234
Cape May	1-877-294-2272 OR (609) 522-6489
Cumberland	1-800-286-4353 OR (856) 691-3713
Essex	
Family Violence Program	(973) 484-4446
The Safe House	(973) 759-2154
The Rachel Coalition of Jewish Family Services	(973) 740-1233
Gloucester	(866) 423-8723 OR (856) 881-3335
Hudson	(201) 333-5700
Hunterdon	1-888-988-4033 OR (908) 788-4044
Mercer	(609) 394-9000
Middlesex	(732) 249-4504
Monmouth	1-888-843-9262 OR (732) 264-4111
Morris	(973) 267-4763
Ocean	1-800-246-8910 OR (732) 244-8259
Passaic	(973) 881-1450
Salem	1-888-632-9511 OR (856) 935-6655
Somerset	(908) 685-1122
Sussex	(973) 875-1211
Union	(908) 355-4357
Warren	1-866-623-7233 (908) 475-8408

Statewide Initiatives

Statewide Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-572-SAFE (7233)

Help is available 24 hours-a-day!

Bilingual and TTY accessible – 1-800-852-7899

New Jersey Coalition for Battered Women
NJ Association of Domestic Violence Professionals
(609) 584-8107 TTY (609) 584-0027

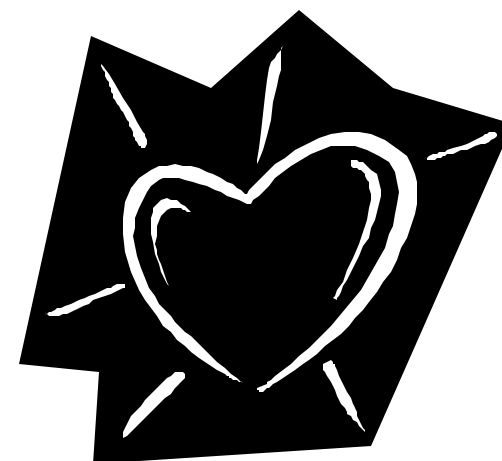
Office on the Prevention of Violence Against Women
(609) 292-8840

New Jersey Department of Community Affairs
Division on Women
Office on the Prevention of Violence Against Women
101 South Broad Street
PO Box 801
Trenton, NJ 08625-0801
(609) 292-8840
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NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS



What to do when you care...



A support guide for families and friends of domestic violence victims



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